

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-09

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01

SAB-01 /056 W

----- 077542

R 091138Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4267

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USINT BAGHDAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 5954

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LE, SY

SUBJECT: LEBANESE-SYRIAN RELATIONS; TAQLA'S VISIT TO DAMASCUS MAY 5.

1. ASKED TAQLA THIS MORNING RE HIS VISIT TO DAMASCUS MAY 5. HE SAID IT WENT VERY WELL. HE AND PRESIDENT ASAD DISCUSSED BRIEFLY LEBANESE-SYRIAN RELATIONS WHICH TAQLA CONSIDERS ARE ON AN EVEN AND CONSTRUCTIVE KEEL. THERE HAS BEEN TALK IN THE PRESS ABOUT ANOTHER MEETING OF PRESIDENTS ASAD AND FRANGIE AT CHTAURA, BUT TAQLA SAID THIS WAS NOT SPECIFICALLY DISCUSSED --ALTHOUGH IT WAS AGREED THAT AT SOME VAGUE TIME IN THE FUTURE ANOTHER SPECIAL MEETING MIGHT BE HELPFUL.

2. TAQLA AND ASAD ALSO TOUCHED LIGHTLY UPON THE NITTY-GRITTY OF LEBANESE-SYRIAN PROBLEMS, I.E. WORKERS PERMITS, EXCHANGE OF INTELLIGENCE, MINOR BORDER PROBLEMS. IT WAS AGREED BETWEEN THEM THAT NONE OF THESE WERE SERIOUS ENOUGH FOR THEM TO HANDLE AND THAT THEY COULD BE WORKED OUT BETWEEN SUBORDINATE TECHNICIANS.

3. SYRIA'S RELATIONSWITH IRAQ WERE ALSO MENTIONED AND
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TAQLA WAS OBVIOUSLY IMPRESSED WITH BITTERNESS EXISTING

BETWEEN BAATH "BRETHREN". HE CONFIRMED WHAT I HAD HEARD PREVIOUSLY FROM BOUTROS DIB, I.E. THAT THEY SYRIANS ARE TAKING A VERY TOUGH LINE ON THE EUPHRATES WATERS AND THAT TO ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES TODAY LITTLE OR NO WATER IS REACHING THE DOWNSTREAM IRAQI. TAQLA, HOWEVER, MADE THE POINT TO ME THAT LEBANON DOES NOT, REPEAT NOT, WISH TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THIS FRATERNAL BAATH PROBLEM.

4. I MENTIONED TO TAQLA THAT AMBASSADOR MURPHY MIGHT BE VISITING BEIRUT MAY 13 TO MEET WITH AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN WHO MIGHT BE EXHIBITING AT THE DAMASCUS FAIR. I TOLD TAQLA THAT IF HE WISHED MEET WITH AMBASSADOR MURPHY, THIS COULD BE ARRANGED. HE WAS APPRECIATIVE, SAID HE WOULD LIKE MEET MURPHY BUT HIS SCHEDULE WAS SUCH THAT HE COULD NOT SET UP AN APPOINTMENT AT THIS TIME
GODLEY

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